

Patent
Serial No. 09/750,833
Agilent Docket No. 10010039-1

In the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A ~~computer-implemented~~ method of using a computerized virtual business model to transact business for a product, comprising:

providing a ~~computer-implemented~~ virtual manufacturer alliance comprising a plurality of manufacturer alliance members, every member of said manufacturer virtual alliance having a computer that is programmed to interact with other components of the virtual business model, all members of said manufacturer alliance being configured to perform a same type of operations associated with manufacturing of said product;

providing a ~~computer-implemented~~ virtual distributor alliance comprising a plurality of virtual distributor alliance members, every virtual distributor alliance member having a computer that is programmed to interact with other components of the virtual business model, all members of said distributor alliance being configured to perform a same type of operations associated with distribution of the manufactured product;

providing a plurality of ~~computer-implemented~~ virtual flows for enabling electronic communication between the computers of the virtual alliances for use in the manufacture and distribution of the product, each of the virtual flows having a computer that is programmed to communicate with access to the computers of the virtual alliances at each stage of the manufacture and distribution of the product, the computers of the virtual flows managing a flow of information along the virtual flows between alliance members;

providing a contracting business, the contracting business having a computer that is programmed to interact with the computers of the virtual alliances for coordinating operations of the virtual alliances; and

~~using to enable~~ the contracting business to establish, via the virtual flows, control over the manufacture and distribution of the product by the plurality of virtual alliances.

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2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
providing a ~~computer implemented~~ virtual material alliance comprising at least one virtual material alliance member, every virtual material alliance member having a computer that is programmed to interact with other components of the virtual business model, all members of said virtual material alliance being configured to perform a same type of operations associated with supplying materials to manufacturer alliance members to be used by the manufacturer alliance members to manufacture said product.
3. Cancelled
4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein each ~~computer implemented~~ virtual distributor alliance member corresponds to providing a ~~computer implemented~~ virtual warehouse.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the providing the plurality of virtual flows includes providing a material and product flow.
6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the providing the plurality of virtual flows includes providing an information flow.
7. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the providing the plurality of virtual flows includes providing a financial flow.
8. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the using the contracting business includes establishing configurable control points in the information flow for facilitating communications by the contracting business.
9. (Original) The method of claim 6, further including establishing virtual regional hubs on the information flow for coordinating the manufacture and distribution of the product for customers in particular geographic locations.

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10. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the providing the plurality of virtual flows includes providing financial and information flows, and further including using the financial flow integrated with the information flow to automatically trigger financial transactions relating to the manufacture and distribution of the product.

11. (Currently Amended) A ~~computer-implemented~~-virtual business model to transact business for a product, comprising:

a ~~computer-implemented~~-virtual manufacturer alliance comprising a plurality of ~~computer-implemented~~-virtual manufacturer alliance members, every virtual manufacturer alliance member having a computer that is programmed to interact with other components of the virtual business model, all members of said manufacturer alliance being configured to perform a same type of operations associated with ~~distributing~~manufacturing the manufactured said product;

a ~~computer-implemented~~-virtual distributor alliance comprising a plurality of virtual distributor alliance members, every virtual distributor alliance member having a computer that is programmed to interact with other components of the virtual business model, all members of said virtual distributor alliance being configured to perform a same type of operations associated with distribution of the manufactured product;

a plurality of ~~computer-implemented~~-virtual flows for enabling electronic communication between the computers of the plurality of virtual alliances for use in the manufacture and distribution of the product, each of the virtual flows having a computer that is programmed to communicate with ~~access to the computers of the~~ virtual alliances at each stage of the manufacture and distribution of the product, the computers of the virtual flows managing a flow of information along the virtual flows between alliance members; and

a contracting business having a computer that is programmed to interact with the computers of the virtual alliances for ~~coordinating~~ operations of among the virtual alliances, wherein the contracting business establishes, via the virtual

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flows, control over the manufacture and distribution of the product by the plurality of virtual alliances.

12. (Currently Amended) The virtual business model of claim 11, further comprising:

a ~~computer-implemented~~ virtual material alliance comprising at least one virtual material alliance member, every virtual material alliance member having a computer that is programmed to interact with other components of the virtual business model, all members of said virtual material alliance being configured to perform a same type of operations associated with supplying materials to manufacturer alliance members to be used by the manufacturer alliance members to manufacture said product.

13. Cancelled

14. (Currently Amended) The virtual business model of claim 11, wherein each ~~computer-implemented~~ virtual distributor alliance member corresponds to a virtual warehouse.

15. (Original) The virtual business model of claim 11 wherein the plurality of virtual flows includes a material and product flow.

16. (Original) The virtual business model of claim 11 wherein the plurality of virtual flows includes an information flow.

17. (Original) The virtual business model of claim 11 wherein the plurality of virtual flows includes a financial flow.

18. (Original) The virtual business model of claim 11, further including configurable control points in the information flow for facilitating communications by the contracting business.

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19. (Original) The virtual business model of claim 16, further including virtual regional hubs on the information flow for coordinating the manufacture and distribution of the product for customers in particular geographic locations.

20. (Original) The virtual business model of claim 11 wherein the plurality of virtual flows includes financial and information flows, and wherein—further including financial transactions are performed the computers of the virtual flows upon being automatically triggered by the financial flow, integrated with the information flow, and relating to the manufacture and distribution of the product.